

WEIRD!

FANTASTIC!

ASTOUNDING!

BAFFLING

NOV. 10c



MYSTERIES



**"The bonds William and I bought
for our country's defense
helped build a house for us!"**

**NOW U. S. SAVINGS BONDS PAID OFF
FOR MRS. ROSE NYSSER OF BRISTOL, PA.**

*"There's nothing more wonderful than a house
and garden of your own," says Mrs. Nysser,
"and no surer way to earn one than to save for it
through U. S. Savings Bonds and the
safe, sure Payroll Savings Plan!"*



Mrs. Rose Nysser says,
"In 1943 William and I
started making U. S.
Savings Bonds a part
of our plan for financial
security. I joined the
Payroll Savings Plan
at the Westheart Shop
Co. where I work, and
later bought a 1950
Ford a month, knowing
my money was safe and
working for me. U. S.
Savings Bonds certainly
make saving easy!"

**You can do what the Nyssers are doing
—the time to start is now!**

Maybe you won't save quite as much as
William and Rose Nysser; maybe you can
save more. But the important thing is to
start now! It only takes three simple steps.

1. Make the big decision—to put saving first—
before you even draw your pay.
2. Decide to save a regular amount system-
atically, week after week, or month after month.
Even small sums, saved on a systematic basis,
become a large sum in an amazingly short time!
3. Start saving by signing up today in the
Payroll Savings Plan where you work.

You'll be providing security not only for
yourself and your family, but for the
brightest fine way of life that's so very im-
portant to every American.

**FOR YOUR SECURITY, AND YOUR
COUNTRY'S TOO, SAVE NOW—
THROUGH REGULAR PURCHASE OF
U. S. SAVINGS BONDS!**

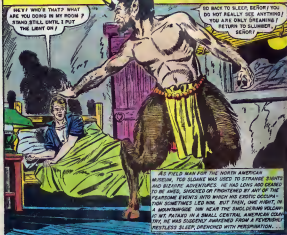


"Savings Bonds alone
made a \$1,000 down
payment on our house!"
says Mrs. Nysser. "Al-
together, we've saved
\$1,000 put in bonds
bought through Payroll
Savings, and we are
keeping right on. When
we retire, our bonds will
make the difference be-
tween comfort and just
getting by. Bonds offer a
practical and profit-
able way to security."



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VOLCANO of VENGEANCE



HEY! WHO'S THAT? WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY ROOM? STAY STILL UNTIL I PUT THE LIGHT ON!

GO BACK TO SLEEP, BEFORE YOU DO NOT REALLY SEE ANYTHING! YOU ARE ONLY DREAMING! RETURN TO SLEEP, BEFORE!

AS FIELD MAN FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN MUSEUM, TOP SLOANE WAS USED TO STRANGE SIGHTS AND BIZARRE ADVENTURES. HE HAD LONG ACCUSTOMED TO BE ASKED, SHOCKED OR FRIGHTENED BY ANY OF THE FEARFUL EVENTS INTO WHICH HIS EXOTIC OCCUPATION SOMETIMES LED HIM. BUT THEN, ONE NIGHT, IN A MOUNTAINOUS JUNGLE NEAR THE SMOOTHER MOUNTAINS, HE WAS IN A SMALL CENTRAL AMERICAN CAMP, HE WAS SUDDENLY JARRED FROM A FEVERISH, RESTLESS SLEEP, DRENCHED WITH PERCUSSION. ...

THE SMOOTHER STILLNESS OF THE MOUNTAIN NIGHT, THE MYSTIC TONE OF THIS MOUNTAINOUS INTERIOR FOR A MOMENT MADE TOP SLOANE INCAPABLE OF MOVEMENT. WHEN HE FINALLY LEAPED FROM THE BED. ...



IT'S ONE OF THE MYSTIC GHOSTS I'VE COME BACK HERE! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

VANISHED! ONE THING'S CERTAIN—NO HUMAN BEING COULD SCALE THAT SHEER, THOUSAND-FOOT PRECIPICE TO REACH THE WINDOW! HEY! THAT GLOW OVER THE CRATER OF MT. INTRAD! THAT VOLCANO HAD BEEN EXTINCT FOR CENTURIES! BUT TONIGHT IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S READY TO ERUPT!



TURNING BACK INTO HIS ROOM, STILL LIGHT-HEADED, DAFFY FOUND HIS STRAIGHT AND SUDDED AWAKENING, FOR FOUND...

A SLAB OF LAVA FROM THE VOLCANO! IT WAS NOT HERE WHEN I WENT TO BED! THAT BOATMAN MUST HAVE LEFT IT!



THE SOLE PURPOSE OF YOUR ISSUES'S TRIP TO THE MT. PATRICK COUNTRY WAS TO INVESTIGATE REPORTS OF CHANGES OF LAVA BEING FOUND BEARING THE IMPRINT OF THE FIGURE OF A MYTHICAL BOATMAN AND IF POSSIBLE, TO SECURE A SAMPLE FOR THE MUSEUM. FOR THREE THRESHOLD WEEKS HE HAD EXPLORED THE AREA AND FOUND NO SIGN OF THE REPORT BEFORE TIME. NOW, THE NIGHT BEFORE HE WAS TO BE TURN TO CIVILIZATION, THE OBJECT OF HIS SEARCH WAS MYSTERIOUSLY BROUGHT TO HIM!

BUT BEFORE YOU COULD COMPLETE HIS EXAMINATION OF THE MYSTICALLY-FLOWING SLAB, LEFT ON HIS BEDROOM...

PEEBO... THE WH-KEEPER!

YARRRR BOY! NOW THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED THE SECRET OF MT. PATRICK, YOU SHALL SURELY DIE, AND ALL OF US IN THE VILLAGE WITH YOU!



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? GET-BET AWAY FROM THAT HUNK OF LAVA! THAT'S VALUABLE!

THERE IS STILL A CHANCE THAT IF I BET THE BOATMAN'S GRAVE-STONE AWAY FROM YOU, YOU'LL BE SAVED!



YOU FOLLOWED THE MYSTERICAL WH-KEEPER TO THE MYSTIC...

THERE! IT IS DESTROYED! I HAVE TAKEN STEP NUMBER ONE TO SAVE THE VILLAGE FROM THE FURY OF THE BOATMEN-GODS!

THAT PEEBOOS CHAIR OF IMPRINTED LAVA PULVERIZED! YOU SUPERSTITIOUS BOY, WHY DID YOU DO THAT?



I GAZERED A WHILE AND BURNING WITH FEVER AND I KNEW THAT THE BOATMEN OF MT. PATRICK HAD BEEN AWAKENED AND THAT THE GREAT FIRES INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN WERE STARTING TO BOIL OVER. IT WAS YOU WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE!



SEE WHAT YOU HAVE DONE! THE VOLCANIC ERUPTS WITH THE FIERY FURY OF THE BOATMEN! LIQUID FIRE WILL ROLL DOWN THE MOUNTAIN AND DESTROY THE VILLAGE UNLESS THEY ARE APPEARED!



WHEN ONE OF THE SACRED GOATMEN WHO LIVE IN THE FLAMING DEPTHS OF THE VOLCANO DIES, HIS FORM IS OUTLINED ON A GRAVE-STONE OF LAVA. IF IT FALLS INTO THE HANDS OF AN UNBELIEVER, THE GOATMEN'S ANGER CAUSES THE FIRES TO OVERFLOW THE MOUNTAIN!



BUT IF WE CAN MAKE A SACRIFICE TO THE VOLCANO GOES IN TIME, OUR DESTRUCTION BY FIRE MAY BE STOPPED!



AS HE SAW TO THE FLOOR, UNCONSCIOUS, TOO SLOANE DECIDED TO GO FLOATING OFF IN A PURPLE FOG. THE THROB AND POUND OF A MILLION TOM-TOMS FILLED HIS EARS AND SWELLED TO A DEAFENING ROAR OF SOUND.



SUDDENLY TOO AWAKENED, AND FOUND HIMSELF TRAPPED AND BLOWN FROM A POLE LIKE A SACRIFICIAL ANIMAL.



DOODOOH, MY HEAD! MUST HAVE BEEN UNCONSCIOUS FOR SOME TIME. WHAT ARE THEY DOING WITH ME? WERE KIDNAPED FROM THE VILLAGE?

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME, PEDRO? YOU AND YOUR WHOLE VILLAGE WILL BE IN A MESS IF THE U.S. CONGRUATE COMES LOOKING FOR ME!



NO MORE SO THAN IF WE ARE DESTROYED, BURNED IN MOLTEN LAVA TO SATISFY THE RAGE OF THE GOATMEN!

WE ENTER THE CATHEDRAL CAVE OF THE GOATMEN! I HOPE YOU WILL BE SACRIFICED IN TIME TO PREVENT THE FINAL BURST OF FLAME FROM MT. PETARD!



DEEP INSIDE THE CAVE, AS PEDRO AND HIS FRANTIC FOLLOWERS WERE ABOUT TO KILL TOO SLOANE AS A HUMAN SACRIFICE INTO A PIT OF FLAME.



OH, GOATMEN! REPAY US FOR THIS HUMAN SACRIFICE BY CALMING THE FLAMING ANGER OF MT. PETARD!

THAT FIGURE OF A WOMAN IN THE FLAMES! YET NONE OF THE OTHERS SEEM TO HEAR OR SEE HER! AM I GOING CRAZY?

WITH THE BARBARIC SCREAMS OF THE MOUNTAIN-MEN RISING IN HIS EARS, TOO SLOANE WAS HURLED OUT INTO FIERY SPACE AT THE FIRST BLAST OF VICIOUS HEAT. BEWILDLED, BLACKNESS SWIFT OVER HIM



TOO SLOANE CAME SWIRLING UP OUT OF THE GLOOM OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS TO FIND HIMSELF IN AN ECHOING UNDERGROUND CHAMBER, BLOWING WITH A FLAME-LIKE LIGHT...



THE EARTH-MAN IS ALIVE, QUEEN ARM!

YES! FOR A MOMENT I WAS AFRAID WE HADN'T SAVED HIM FROM THE FLAME PITS IN TIME!

WHERE AM I? HOW CAN I POSSIBLY BE ALIVE? NOBODY COULD HAVE LIVED THROUGH THAT ROARING INFERNO!

NOT WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE SOOT-PEOPLES HERE IN THE DEPTHS OF THE VOLCANO, WE CAN CONTROL THE POWER OF FIRE!



WHO ARE YOU? YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE ONE OF THE SOOT-PEOPLES!

MY NAME IS ARM, QUEEN OF THE SOOTMEN! AFTER I DESIGNED MY COMBUSTIBLE STORY, I'LL TELL YOU AN INTERESTING STORY!



AT A RESTONE FROM QUEEN ARM AND A FEW WORDS IN AN EXOTIC TONGUE, THE OLD SOOTMAN MOVED FROM THE ROOM, WALKING WITHOUT FEAR, STRAIGHT THROUGH A CURTAIN OF ROARING FLAME!



DIDN'T THE FIRE BURN THEM? IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE!

WHEN YOU HAVE LIVED HERE AS LONG AS I HAVE, NOTHING SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE!

I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, TOO SLOANE... I KNEW ALL ABOUT YOU FROM THE MOMENT YOU ARRIVED IN THIS WILD COUNTRY! TONIGHT I SENT ONE OF MY SUBJECTS TO BRING YOU THE SOOTMAN GRAVESTONE FOR WHICH YOU WERE SEARCHING AND TO HAVE HIM ASK A FAVOR OF YOU IN RETURN. BUT MY MESSENGER BECAME TOO FRIGHTENED WHEN YOU AWAKENED SUDDENLY AND DIDN'T STOP TO GIVE YOU THIS MESSAGE!



ONCE, HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO, I LIVED IN PEACE'S VILLAGE! I, TOO, WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE OFFENDED THE SOOTMEN, CAUSED THE VOLCANO TO ERUPT, AND WAS SACRIFICED IN THE SAME MANNER THAT YOU WERE, TONIGHT!



BUT YOU WERE SAVED?

HERE THE GOATMEN SEEMED ENTRAPPED BY ME AND MADE ME THEIR QUEEN / DURING MY REIGN THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER HUMAN SACRIFICES OF NAFLLESS VILLAGERS OVER WHICH I HAD NO CONTROL / THERE MUST BE STOPPED!

THEN THE VILLAGERS' BELIEF ABOUT THE GOATMEN'S ANGER IS ONLY A SUPERSTITION?



OF COURSE / WHEN THE GOATMEN DIE AND THEIR FORM IS IMPRESSED UPON A SLAB OF MOLTEN LAVA, IT IS A BARE FUNERAL RITE AFTER IT IS DONE, NO ONE REALLY CARES WHAT HAPPENS TO THE GRAVESTONES / COME, I WILL SHOW YOU!

HEY / WE'RE NOT GOING TO TRY TO WALK THROUGH THAT WALL OF FIRE, ARE WE?



QUEEN ANN LAUGHED OFF TOO'S FEARS AS THEY HEARD THE FIRE-HALL, SUFFOCATING HEAT BLASTED AT THEM / YET, MIRACULOUSLY, THEY WERE NOT BURNED

FIRE IS THE GOAT-PEOPLES BREATH AND CANNOT HURT THEM / AND TEMPORARILY YOU ARE ONE OF US AND SAFE!

THIS—

IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE!



THROUGH THE FIRE-CURTAIN THEY ENTERED A CHAMBER, FILLED WITH A STRANGELY SIZZLING ACIDIC-LIKE SCENT. QUEEN ANN'S VOICE LOWEDED TO AN ANGRY WHISPER...

THIS IS THE VAULT OF THE DEAD / ALL GOATMEN, WHEN THEY DIE, ARE BROUGHT HERE, THEIR BODIES PLACED ON PIECES OF MOLTEN LAVA, AND WHILE THE IMPRESSION IS BEING MADE, THEY ARE REINCARNATED ONCE AGAIN INTO MOUNTAIN GOATS ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN!



THE SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HEAVY VILLAGERS AND THEIR SACRIFICES ARE ALL FOR NOTHING / THAT IS WHY YOU MUST STOP THEM, TOO SLOANE!

BUT HOW? HOW COULD I POSSIBLY RETURN TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD AFTER THIS?



YOU SHALL NOT HERE IS JAN-THE-WISE, WHO DIED JUST A FEW MINUTES BEFORE YOU ARRIVED / HE WAS ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MOST BRILLIANT OF MY SUBJECTS SOME OF THE OTHERS USED TO TEASE HIM ABOUT HIS BROKEN HORN BUT HE WAS ONE OF THE REALLY GREAT GOATMEN!



THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING / AT ANY MOMENT, I'LL AWAKE FROM THIS STRANGE DREAM!

COME! I'LL SHOW YOU A WAY OF ESCAPE / YOU MUST MAKE THE VILLAGERS STOP OFFERING US HUMAN SACRIFICES!



THIS IS THE SECRET EXIT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, USED BY THE REINCARNATED FORMS OF THE GODDESS! FOLLOW! IF I DON'T FORGET WHAT I TOLD YOU! GOOD-BYE, TOD SLOANE!



AS TOD ENTERED THE TUNNEL, HE LOOKED BACK, BUT GREEN ARMY WAS GONE. THERE WAS NOTHING BACK THERE BUT A WALL OF FIRE COVERING THE OPENING THROUGH WHICH HE HAD CHARGED! AFTER WHAT SEEMED HOURS OF SLITHERING THROUGH THE GLOOMY LIGHT OF THE TUNNEL...



(I SHALL FEEL MY WAY AND THERE'S A SHINING LIGHT UP AHEAD!)

AT LAST! THE TUNNEL BROUGHT ME TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD! AND ANY EXIT IS ALSO AN ENTRANCE! I'LL NOTE WHERE IT IS AND SOMEDAY BRING BACK AN EXPEDITION TO GO INTO THE MOUNTAIN AND EXPLORE THOSE UNDERGROUND CAVERNS!



BUT AS TOD WHEELED AROUND TO FIND THE TUNNEL EXIT...



GONE! THERE ISN'T ANY TUNNEL NOW! IT WAS RIGHT HERE A MOMENT AGO! I HADN'T MOVED FROM THE SPOT!

MANY HOURS LATER, STAGGERING WITH EXHAUSTION, TOD SLOANE RETURNED TO THE JAIL...



SEÑOR SLOANE! BUT IT CAN'T BE! I, MYSELF, HELPED THROW HIM INTO THE FIERY BOBELS OF THE VOLCANO! NO ONE COULD SURVIVE SUCH A FATE! IT MUST BE A GHOST!

IT'S BE ALL RIGHT, PEDRO, ALIVE AND ROCKING! AND WITH NEWS FOR YOU!

BY SOME MIRACLE HE WAS NOT BURNED TO ASHES IN THE VOLCANIC FLAMES!



LISTEN CLOSELY TO WHAT I HAVE TO TELL YOU...

PEDRO AND THE OTHER AYES VILLAINS LISTENED BARE-MOUNTED AS TOD SLOANE REPORTED ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED TO HIM AND GAVE THEM GREEN ARMY'S MESSAGE...



AND NOW, IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'M EXHAUSTED. I'M GOING UPSTAIRS AND SLEEP FOR ABOUT FORTY YEARS!

IT SHALL BE AS YOU AND THE QUEEN SAY, SEÑOR SLOANE! WE ARE CONVINCED THAT YOU SPEAK THE TRUTH! THERE SHALL BE NO MORE SACRIFICES!

BACK UPSTAIRS IN HIS ROOM...

CAN'T KEEP EYES OPEN - ANOTHER SECOND!
GOT TO SLEEP - SLEEP!



HOURS LATER

WHAT - WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
SOMETHING AWAKENED ME? HET -
WHO'S THAT? COME BACK HERE!



BLAST IT! I'VE LET HIM ESCAPE AGAIN! OR -
OR MAYBE HE - HE WASN'T EVEN REALLY HERE AT
ALL! I-I MUST'VE BEEN STILL HALF-ASLEEP,
IMAGINE THINGS!



BUT THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE - SOMETHING!
THIS HOOF PRINT PROVES IT! AND MI-TATAGO IS GONE
AGAIN! BUT STILL, NONE OF THAT OTHER COULD HAVE
HAPPENED, REALLY! THAT PART OF IT MUST HAVE
BEEN A DREAM!



BUT AS HE TURNED FROM THE WINDOW, THERE
BY THE DRESSER, HE SAW...

ANOTHER ONE OF THE SOUVENIR'S
SPRAYERSTONES, JUST LIKE THE ONE PEDRO
DESTROYED! GUESS ANNI HAD SENT ME
ANOTHER ONE TO TAKE BACK TO THE
MUSEUM!



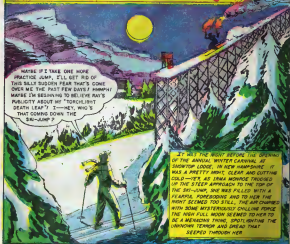
AND ON THIS SPRAYERSTONE CHAMP OF SO-
LIDIFIED ASH, CLEARLY DEFINED, WAS THE
FIGURE OF JAY-THE-WOLF, WHOM HE HAD
SEEN BACK IN THE FIERY HEART OF THE
VOLCANO!

THIS PROVES THAT IT
ALL REALLY HAPPENED! I WAS WITHIN
THE VOLCANO!
AND YET...



IMMEDIATELY,
FOO BLOOMED FROM
HIS EARS, IN-
CLOSING THE SOAP-
MAN'S SPRAYERSTONE
AND LEFT THE MAN
TO RETURN HOME,
BEMOANING HOW
HE COULD POSSI-
BLY EXPLAIN TO
THE OTHERS THE
THINGS THAT HAD
HAPPENED TO HIM,
AND KNOWING
THAT HE NEVER
COULD REALLY
EXPLAIN THEM!

The Phantom Snow Queen



IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE ANNUAL WINTER CARNIVAL AT SNOWTOP LODGE, IN NEW HAMPSHIRE. IT WAS A PRETTY MOIST, CLEAR AND CUTTING COLD—YET, AS IRMA MORRIS TRUCKED UP THE STEEP APPROACH TO THE TOP OF THE SKI-JUMP, SHE WAS FILLED WITH A FEELING, FOREBODING AND TO HER THE NIGHT SEEMED TOO STILL. THE AIR CHARGED WITH SOME MYSTERIOUSLY CHILLING FORCE THE HIGH FULL MOON SEEMED TO HER TO BE A MENACING THING, SPOTLIGHTING THE UNKNOWN TERROR AND DREAD THAT SEEPED THROUGH HER.



PARALYZED WITH FEAR, IRMA SHOUTED FOR THE FOOLHARTY SKIER TO TURN OFF THE APPROACH OR FALL, BEFORE HE REACHED THE JUMP. THEN, AS THE BLACK-SHIPPED FIGURE LOOMED NIST





WHAT A BEAUTIFUL, PERFECT JUMP! MAYBE WHOEVER THE FOOL IS WILL BE LUCKY AND MAKE A SAFE LANDING!



THEN, RIGHT BEFORE IRMA'S TERROR-FILLED EYES, SHE SAW THE BLACK-CLAD SKIER LOSE HIS BALANCE AND PINWHEELED AWAYWARD IN THE STILL NIGHT AIR AS A SUDDEN SHADOW ENVELOPED THE MOON. A SHRILL DEATH SCREAM CHATTERED THE ICE BLANCE.



SHR! HE CAN'T POSSIBLY SURVIVE THAT FALL! I-I-VE GOT TO GO DOWN THERE AND SEE IF HE'S STILL ALIVE, THEN GO FOR HELP!



AS IRMA RACED, WITH THROBBING HEART, TOWARD THE SKI-JUMP LANDING STRETCH, FOR A FEW MINUTES POCK UNWITTINGLY DEFOCUSED HER VIEW OF THE SCENE. WHEN SHE BROKE OUT INTO THE GLEAT AGAIN AND STARED, WIDE-EYED TOWARD THE SPOT WHERE THE CRUMPLED BODY SHOULD HAVE SPRAWLED.

HE-HE'S GONE! I-I CAN'T UNDERSTAND!



BUT HER RELIEF SOON GAINED TO SHARPING TERROR THAT SENT CRYERS DOWN HER SANE.

I'M SURE THIS IS THE SPOT WHERE HE LANDED! YES THE SNOW IS FRESH, UNBROKEN - JUST AS THOUGH NO ONE HAD FALLEN! BUT I SAW IT HAPPEN!



HE COULDN'T HAVE BRID DOWN THIS SLOPE WITHOUT LEAVING TRACKS, BUT THERE ISN'T A SIGN THE WHOLE LENGTH OF THE APPROACH! I-I MUST HAVE BEEN IMAGINING IT! BUT THESE TORCHES I FOUND AT THE SCENE OF THE CRASH! THEY'RE REAL!



I'LL HAVE TO TELL RAY THAT I CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH THE TORCHLIGHT DEATH LEAP! TWO THING THAT HAPPENED TONIGHT MUST HAVE BEEN A DEATH OMEN, A FINAL WARNING THAT I'LL BE KILLED IF I CONTINUE TO DO THIS DANGEROUS STUNT!



BUT WHY DO YOU WANT TO CANCEL THE JUMP, IRMA? WHAT HAPPENED OUT THERE TONIGHT?

I-I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANY SENSIBLE REASON, RAY! PLEASE DON'T QUESTION ME ANY MORE!



LATER THAT NIGHT...

ANOTHER TORMENTING, SLEEPLESS NIGHT! I-I CAN'T STAND IT, ESPECIALLY AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT! MAYBE I AM LOSING MY MIND!

IN A FEW MINUTES, THE FEAR-TORTURED IRMA MADE UP HER MIND. SHE WOULD GO TO NEW YORK, CONSULT HER UNCLE, A NOTED PSYCHIATRIST. HE WOULD HELP HER...

I DON'T DARE WAKE RAY AND TELL HIM I'LL JUST GO, AND LEAVE HIM A NOTE OF EXPLANATION!



BUT AS IRMA OPENED THE DOOR AND STEPPED OUT INTO THE WINDY, SNOW-SWEPT NIGHT, A DRAFT CARRIED UP HER NOTE AND TOSSED IT INTO THE COE FIRE...

I CAN CATCH THE THREE A.M. TRAIN FROM TOWN AND BE IN NEW YORK IN THE MORNING!



THE NEXT MORNING WHEN RAY MORRIS FOUND HIS WIFE GONE, HE SEARCHED FOR HER, HAND-STRICKEN.

I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT HER, BOSS! SHE'LL PROBABLY BE BACK TONIGHT FOR THE OPENING OF THE WINTER CARNIVAL. SHE WOULDN'T MISS THAT!



ALL THAT RAY, GUESTS POURED INTO SNOWTOP LODGE FOR THE OPENING OF THE FAMOUS WINTER CARNIVAL, ATTRACTED BY THE GREAT PUBLICITY GIVEN TO IRMA'S TONGUE-IT DEATH LEAP, A DARING NEW STUNT. BUT THAT NIGHT...

IRMA ISN'T HERE AND I'LL HAVE TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE DEATH LEAP'S BEEN CANCELLED!



BUT BEFORE RAY COULD MAKE HIS ANNOUNCEMENT...

THERE'S IRMA MORRIS UP AT THE TOP OF THE RUM, NOW, READY TO START DOWN!





IT'S IRMA ALL RIGHT / SHE MUST'VE GOT BACK AT THE LAST MINUTE AND COME STRAIGHT TO THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN / I KNOW SHE COULDN'T REALLY LOSE HER MIND AND LET ME DOWN!



THE MOST WINTER CARIVAL CROWD WATCHED IN BREATHLESS AWE AS THE TORCH-LIT FIGURE IN WHITE SHOODED DOWN AT BREAKNECK SPEED TOWARD THE FRESCO-HIGH JUMP STRUCTURE...

ATTA GAL, MONKEY! YOU'RE TERRIFIC!



FOR A MOMENT, I THOUGHT SHE WASN'T GOING TO MAKE IT! / WHEN? MAYBE IRMA'S RIGHT AND THIS NIGHT JUMP IS TOO DANGEROUS! / I WON'T LET HER TAKE IT AGAIN!



AS RAY FOUGHT HIS WAY THROUGH THE CROWD TOWARD HIS WIFE, SHE IGNORED HIS CALLS AND PUSHED AWAY FROM HIM, WITHOUT TURNING BACK...

IRMA! COME BACK HERE! / I WANT TO TALK TO YOU! / CAN'T YOU HEAR ME? / COME BACK!



IRMA, I WHERE ARE YOU GOING?



RAY WONDERED WHY HE HAD RUN INTO THE GROVE OF TREES AFTER HIS WIFE, BUT HE COULDN'T FIND HER. IRMA SEEMED TO HAVE VANISHED LIKE A WHIFF OF SMOKE INTO THE COLD NIGHT AIR!

SHE'S PROBABLY EMBARRASSED ABOUT RUNNING OUT ON ME LAST NIGHT! / SHE'LL COME BACK TO THE LODGE WHEN SHE CALMS DOWN!



BUT RAY WAS WRONG. HOURS WENT BY AND IRMA DIDN'T RETURN...

POOR RAY! HE'S SO WORRIED ABOUT IRMA! THERE IS SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THIS! / WONDER HOW HE GOT HER TO THE STATION IN TOWN! / SHE JUST SEEMS TO HAVE DISAPPEARED!

WHERE IS SHE? WHAT IS WRONG? / WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HER?



AND THAT NIGHT, JUST AS RAY WAS ABOUT TO ANNOUNCE CANCELLATION OF INNA'S FORN-ALIENT DEATH LEAP...



BUT, TONIGHT, AS THE WHITE-GLAD-SHEEN JOOMED PAST RAY'S TOWER THE DOWLED HEAD TURNED TOWARD HIM AND REVEALED...



FRAUGHTENED, CONFUSED, RAY MONROE CALLED THE HOSPITAL IN NEW YORK...



I'M DUTTE SURE THERE'S NO MISTAKE, SIR! WE DO HAVE A PATIENT, ANSWERING YOUR DESCRIPTION, A MRS. IRMA MONROE, WHO WAS INJURED AS YOU DESCRIBED!

I—E DEEF! THANK YOU!

BUT IT'S RIDICULOUS, RAY! WE ALL SAW HER TAKE THE JUMP LAST NIGHT AND TONIGHT! WE CARRIED HER HERE, JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO, INJURED!

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY OR THINK! I'M GOING TO NEW YORK—TO IRMA! SHE NEEDS ME!



AS HIS TRAIN RACED THROUGH THE BLEAK NIGHT, RAY MONROE RECALLED THE WEIRD AND BIZARRE HAPPENINGS THAT HAD OCCURRED TO HIM AND HIS WIFE DURING THE PAST 48 HOURS. HE TRIED BUT COULD FIND NO LOGICAL EXPLANATION FOR THEM...



THE NEXT MORNING, IN IRMA'S ROOM AT THE MERCY HOSPITAL...



BUT YOUR WIFE COULDN'T HAVE TAKEN THOSE BIG JUMPS THE LAST TWO NIGHTS. SHE'S BEEN RIGHT HERE, ALL THAT TIME, UNCONSCIOUS, WITH A NURSE ALWAYS PRESENT! YOU MUST HAVE SEEN SOMEBODY ELSE!

BUT IT WAS IRMA! I DON'T EXPECT THEM TO BELIEVE OR UNDERSTAND, BUT I KNOW!

SUDDENLY, AT THE SOUND OF RAY'S VOICE, IRMA STIRRED! SHE LOOKED UP AT HER HUSBAND. SHE SPOKE, AND THERE WAS AN Eerie, GHOST-LIKE SOUND TO HER VOICE AND AN OTHER-WORLD LOOK TO HER SMILE...



RAY, HONEY! I KNEW YOU'D COME! NOW—HOW DID YOU LIKE THOSE JUMPS? I MADE, DARLING! I DON'T DISAPPOINT YOU AFTER ALL, DO I?

WHY—WHY, IT'S ALMOST A MIRACLE! SHE'S RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS AND SEEMS ONE HUNDRED PER CENT IMPROVED!



WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT, RAY? WHAT DID I JUST SAY? I—E DON'T REMEMBER, NOW!

IT DOESN'T MATTER! FORGET IT AND GO TO SLEEP, NOW, IRMA—A NICE NORMAL SLEEP THAT WILL REST YOU UP!

HER PULSE AND RESPIRATION ARE NORMAL AGAIN, MR. MONROE! THERE'S NO QUESTION ABOUT HER RECOVERING, NOW! YOUR FINDING OUT ABOUT HER ACCIDENT AND GETTING HERE SAVED HER LIFE!



YES!

RAY MONROE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE STRANGE DRAIN OF EVENTS THAT HAD BROUGHT THIS MIRACLE AND DOUBTED THAT HE EVER WOULD. BUT HE WAS GRATEFUL AND ACCEPTED THE CIRCUMSTANCES AS ONE OF THOSE STRANGE OUT-OF-TWO-WORLD HAPPENINGS BEYOND THE KNOWLEDGE OF MERE MAN.

The Lady was a *TIGER*

ALERT! HER—HER FACE! IT—IT'S HORRIBLE! IT'S CHANGING! YOU MUST DO SOMETHING, DOCTOR!

WHAT KIND OF NONSENSE IS THIS, INSA?

SOMETHING IS HAPPENING TO BONNIE, DOCTOR.



YOU'VE PROBABLY READ A LOT ABOUT STUART AND BONNIE JACKSON, THE HUSBAND-AND-WIFE TEAM OF BIG-CAT HUNTERS WHO BOWED HOME WILD ANIMALS FOR ZOOS AND CIRCUSES. BUT NOT RECENTLY. YOU'VE PROBABLY WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED TO US. WELL, THIS IS THE STORY—THE WHOLE WILD AND TERRIFYING ACCOUNT OF THE FEARFUL AND BIZARRE EVENTS THAT OCCURRED ON OUR LAST EXPEDITION...

WE HAD BEEN TIGER-HUNTING IN A LITTLE-EXPLORED SECTION OF WESTERN INDIA. BONNIE WAS ACCIDENTALLY SHOT BY A GUN-SNARE, AND WE'D BROUGHT HER HERE TO THE LONELY OUTPOST HOME OF A MYSTERIOUS AND REPTIL-LIKE DR. ZANDER, WHOSE SHEDS BEEN TREATED, WHEN THIS HAPPENED...

STOP THESE FOOLISH HYSTERICS!



DOCTOR! SOMETHING IS HAPPENING TO BONNIE! HER EYES ARE CHANGING AND HER TEETH GROWING! AND HER SKIN IS GETTING STRIPED! THIS IS HORRIBLE!





WHAT HAPPENED, SHE--YOUR WIFE HAD A SUDDEN DOCTOR'S VISIT? SHE--ATTACK OF JUNGLE MARIA? SHE--DOHNERT DID--THREW A FIT, LEAPED OUT OF BED AND ATTACKED ME WITH TEETH AND NAILS! WHEN I PASSED OUT, SHE--SHE DISAPPEARED!



SOMEONE--SOMEONE AND YOU SAY SHE RIPPED YOUR CLOTHES AND WOUNDED YOU LIKE THAT? THAT'S RIDICULOUS! IT WAS THE TIGER!

WHAT TIGER? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I SAW NO TIGER!



FREEDOM AND CONFUSION SWIFT OVER ME AS THE DOCTOR DEMANDS SEEING THE TIGER AND FLEW INTO A HURRICANE RAGE AGAINST THE NATIVES WHO BACKED UP MY STORY!

YOU LYING SUPERSTITIOUS FOOLS JUST THINK YOU SAW A TIGER? IT WAS BOWTIA JACKSON, IN THE THROES OF JUNGLE MARIA, THAT YOU SAW FLEE THROUGH THE WINDOW! GET OUT!



I APOLOGIZED FOR THAT DISPLAY OF TEMPER, STUART, BUT IT'S BORING WHEN THERE'S NO HORROR NATIVES GET ANY QUIET TO QUEST TO IMAGINE THINGS, IT'S TOO MUCH.

I SAW THE TIGER! IT WASN'T ANY IMAGINATION! WHEN THERE'S NO HORROR NATIVES GET ANY QUIET TO QUEST TO IMAGINE THINGS, IT'S TOO MUCH.



WE'LL ROUND UP A HUNTING PARTY OF NATIVE GUN-SEARERS AND BUSH-SEARERS, THEN START THE SEARCH FOR HER!

BUT THAT'LL TAKE A COUPLE OF HOURS! WHY CAN'T YOU AND I GO IMMEDIATELY? MY WIFE'S OUT THERE IN THAT JUNGLE SOMEWHERE, I'LL FEVERISH, IN DANGER, I WE CAN'T WAIT!



DR. ZANDER SEEMED TO GO INTO THE JUNGLE WITH-OUT A HUNTING PARTY, SAID WHO GET LOST OR KILLED. BUT I WAS FILD WITH FEAR FOR MY WIFE. AFTER A BRIEF ARGUMENT, I GET OUT ALONE...

I'VE GOT TO FIND SOME PART! I'VE GOT A QUICK FEELING THAT THERE'S A LOT MORE TO THIS THAN THE DOC SAYS!



"I HAD PENETRATED BUT A COUPLE OF HUNDRED YARDS INTO THE DENSE, STAGNANT JUNGLE, WHEN..."

MR. JACKSON! WAIT! I WANT TALK TO YOU! I WANT CASE HOW THE DEVIL-DOCTOR PUNISHES ME!

IT'S INSA, DR. ZANDER'S NURSE!



"THERE IN THE SPOOKY, DARKENED JUNGLE GLADE, THE HARBINGER IN MY DREAMS TURNED TO ICE AS I LISTENED TO DRONE PROPHETIC BABELINGS..."

DEVIL-DOCTOR LAMBER WILL KILL ME IF HE LEARNS I'VE TOLD YOU THE TRUTH! HE USED TIGER'S BLOOD, NOT HUMAN BLOOD! YOUR WIFE WAS BLOOD OF GREAT STRIPES ONES RUNNING THROUGH HER VEINS! HE -- HE DID IT PURPOSELY!

WHAT?



IT'S AN EXPERIMENT HE'S BEEN WORKING ON FOR YEARS. THE CHEMICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMAL'S BLOOD, SO THAT WHEN INJECTED INTO VEINS OF HUMANS, IT WILL TURN THEM INTO BEASTS! YOUR WIFE WAS HIS FIRST MAJOR EXPERIMENT AND IT WORKED! I--I SAW IT! SHE BECAME A TIGRESS!



YOU AND THE OTHERS DID SEE A TIGER LEAP FROM THE WINDOW! IT WAS BONITA! SHE JOINED THE OTHER WILD BEASTS IN THE JUNGLES!

BUT THAT'S PREPOSTEROUS! YET, SHE WAS CHANGING--HER EYES, HER TEETH, THE STRIPES SHOWING ON HER SKIN!



"I COULDN'T FULLY BELIEVE, ACCEPT, THE HORRIBLE THING JOHN HAD TOLD ME. I HAD TO LEAVE JOHN AND PEEL ON THROUGH THE SLOTTED JUNGLE RIGHT IN MY SEARCH FOR BONITA..."

EVERY TIME I TURN AROUND I FIND THOSE FIERY, SATANIC EYES STALKING AT ME! SOME MURDEROUS BEAST IS STALKING ME!



"AT LAST, THE MOONLIGHT REVEALED THE TIGER, CROUCHED ON A LOG! I RAISED MY RIFLE, BUT IT WOULDN'T FIRE!"

SLASTED GUN JAMMED! YET THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH THE MECHANISM! I'M COMPLETELY AT THE MERCY OF THAT GREAT CAT--YET ALL IT DOES IS WATCH ME AND PURR!



I'VE INSERTED A NEW CARTRIDGE! SHOULD WORK NOW! HEY! THE TIGER'S COMING AWAY!



FOILED AND EXHAUSTED FROM FIGHTING THROUGH THE JUNGLE DARKNESS, I PUSHED ON, RANIC FADING FAST BEHIND ME WITH SHaky STEP, HUNTING FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES, BAPTISM EXPERIENCE WAS BOUND TO STAVE NEXT..."

A WATER HOLE! MURDER I'LL FEEL BETTER WHEN I'VE QUENCHED MY THIRST!



A LION! CAN'T GET THE SPIN-SPIN TIME! THIS IS CURTAINS FOR ME!



"A SINGLE BLOW FROM THAT MASSIVE FIST KNOCKED ME FLAT THE LAST THING I SAW BEFORE MERCY-FUL DARKNESS SWIFT OVER ME WAS THAT CAVERNOUS JAW JAWMED WITH THE LONG FANGS OF DEATH, COMING TOWARD ME..."



"I SWAM THROUGH MUD, MARCHING ARMS, FILLED WITH SCREAMING, GROWLING GOLF-BEEMAN, HALF-BEAST CREATURES, ALL WITH THE FACE OF MY POOR BONNIE! ALL THROUGH THE WHOLE THING, BORNING WITH DEMONIC LAUGHTER, WAS THE UNKNOWN DR. ZANDER..."



"THEN I CAME SPRINGING OUT OF MY CONSCIOUSNESS, TO FIND..."

A TIGER! AND IT SEEMS FRIENDLY! IT MUST HAVE KILLED THE LION—SAVED MY LIFE! BUT WHY? UNLESS IT—IT'S BONNIE!



TORCHES AND THE SOUND OF DRUMS COMING THE WAY! WHAT HON? HEY, TIGER! BONNIE! COME BACK! DON'T BE FRIGHTENED! I WON'T LET THEM HURT YOU!



"I FELT LIKE A FOOL, CALLING THE TIGER BY MY WIFE'S NAME. YET I SOMEHOW HAD TO DO IT! BUT THE BEAST BOUNCED OFF, SOON I WAS JOINED BY A SEARCHING PARTY OF DR. ZANDER'S NATIVES. I TOLD THEM MY EXPERIENCE..."

... AND THAT'S HOW IT HAPPENED! I KNOW IT SOUNDS UNBELIEVABLE, BUT

ZAMMAGA! YOU DEVIL-HAN, TOO, LIKE DOCTOR! TIGER NEVER FRIENDLY TO HUMAN! TIGER CAN'T KILL LION! KALA ZAMMAGA-NOT SAVE US FROM SUCH EVIL SPIRITS!



"THE BEAST SEEMED TO BE COMING THAT I WAS PART OF SOME GREAT SUPERNATURAL PLAN, AND AFTER ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED, I WAS BEGINNING TO BELIEVE IT MYSELF! THEN, WHEN HE GOT BACK TO DR. ZANDER'S PLACE..."

HELP! DEVIL-DOCTOR PRACTICE SUCH EVIL ON INDIA!

SOME KIND OF DISTURBANCE! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING BACK HERE!



DR. ZANDER, HOLD INGA PRISONER! TRY BAD MAGIC ON HER! (UNLESS HE FEELS HER, WE BURN DOWN HOUSE!)

TAKE IT EASY, BOYS! I'LL GO IN AND SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT! I PROMISE YOU INGA WON'T BE HURT!



"I RUSHED INTO THE HOUSE AND BURST INTO DR. ZANDER'S SECRET ROOM, WHERE EVERYBODY WAS FORBIDDEN TO ENTER."

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, ZANDER?

HOW DARE YOU INTERRUPT MY GREAT WORK! GET OUT!



NOT UNTIL YOU EXPLAIN EVERYTHING—ABOUT THE WORLD WILL BURN—AND INGA—AND WHATEVER KIND OF MALPRACTICE YOU'RE UP TO!

I'LL TELL YOU, ALL RIGHT! ALL THE WORLD WILL SOON KNOW WHAT A MIRACLE I'VE PERFORMED AND HOW AFTER THIS EXPERIMENT PROVES THAT WHAT I DID TO YOUR WIFE WAS NO ACCIDENT!



YOUR WIFE WAS THE HONOR OF BEING THE FIRST SUBJECT! WHEN I MADE THE TRANSFUSION, I USED ESPECIALLY TREATED BLOOD OF A RECENTLY KILLED TIGER. CUB! MY THEORY HAS LONG BEEN THAT SUCH A TRANSFUSION WOULD TURN THE SUBJECT INTO THE HAND OF DEATH WHOSE BLOOD WAS FLOWING THROUGH HIS OR HER VEINS! IT WORKED!



BUT THAT'S OUR ARMY AND LISTEN TO REASON! YOU CAN'T CONTINUE SUCH EVIL WORK!

HORSENSE! WHEN I PROVE AN EXPERIMENT CONCLUSIVELY BY TURNING INGA INTO A THORP, TOO, I WILL BE RICH, FAMOUS! BUT FIRST I SHALL DISPOSE OF YOU!



"AS ZANDER'S FINGER WHITTLED DOWN THE TRIGGER, HIS HANDY FINGERING BYTES AND TRITONING FEATURES TOLD ME THAT HE WAS COMPLETELY, AUTOMATICALLY MAD, THEN..."



THAT TIGER KILLED ZANDER WITH ONE SMASHING BLOW! NOW IT SEEMS TO BE PURPOSEFULLY DESTROYING HIS BLOOD BANK!



"THE BEAST IGNORED INDA AND ME AND LEFT" BUT IT WON'T ESCAPE FROM THAT SOLID HAIL OF LEAD! NOTHING COULD LIVE THROUGH THAT! YET THE BULLETS AREN'T AFFECTING IT!



"SOME OF THE BRAVER NATIVES WERE POSITIVE THAT THE TIGER HAD BEEN HIT AND HAD RUN INTO THE JUNGLE TO DIE. I WENT WITH THEM TO FIND IT. SOME DISTANCE FROM THE HOUSE..."

GUNS AND WOUND! SEE, TIGER! CAME HERE TO DIE! WOMAN HERE TOO!

IT—IT'S BONNA!



NO WOUNDS ON TIGER—AGAIN! NO SIGN OF BULLET! NO OR THE STRIPPED HAIR! NO OR THE ENLARGED BUMP OF BENT OR THE HOW HE CATLINE EYES! DIE!

HELLO, DARLING'S— I—WHAT HAPPENED? I HAD THE STRANGE—MY ORGANS FOR WERE THEY ORGANS?

OF COURSE, IT WAS JUST A WEIRD NIGHTMARE, BONNIE! NOW COULD ANYTHING LIKE THAT— REALLY HAPPEN? FORGET IT NOW, HONEY! LET'S NOT EVER EVEN TALK ABOUT IT AGAIN!

PERHAPS THAT WOULD BE BEST!



"BONNIE RECOVERED COMPLETELY WITHIN A FEW DAYS AND HE BRAGGED BACK TO CIVILIZATION. HE NEVER WENT ON ANOTHER EXPEDITION AGAIN, BUT TERROR OF THE STRANGE AND UNKNOWN HAD SCARED IN TOO DEEPLY. SOMETIMES EVEN NOW WHEN I HEAR AN ALLEY CAT'S CRY SCREAMING IN THE BLOOMY NIGHT, I BREAK OUT IN A COLD SWEAT, AND WONDER IF IT REALLY IS A CAT I'M HEARING..."

The End

WIN CASH PRIZES!

All you have to do is write a letter of 150 words or less and tell us which story you liked best, which you liked second best and which you liked third best, and why.



1st PRIZE	\$15.00
2nd PRIZE	5.00
3rd PRIZE	3.00
4th PRIZE	2.00



Follow these rules carefully—and your letter may be a prize winner! Letters to be no longer than 150 words, give your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice of stories in the magazine, give your name, address, and age, tell us what other magazines you read regularly. The judges' decision will be final. Duplicate awards will be made in case of ties. All entries must be postmarked no later than MIDNIGHT, OCTOBER 28, 1951.

Address: Contest Editor, **BAFFLING MYSTERIES**, 23 W. 47th St., New York 19

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

THE SAINE RIVER FLOWS THROUGH SMALL TOWNS IN LOWER GERMANY. AT ITS NARROW PONTS, THERE ARE FERRYBOATS TO CARRY PASSENGERS TO THE OTHER SIDE. HERE IS THE STRANGE STORY OF ONE FERRYMAN AND HIS BARGE.

BUSINESS WAS SLOW FOR HANS BAKER, THE BARGE MAN... SO SLOW THAT HE HAD TO KEEP HIS BARGE BOING AT NIGHT LONG AFTER THE OTHER FERRYMEN HAD CLOSED SHOP.

LOOK AT OLD HANS / HE STAYS ALL NIGHT TO GET THE LAST FARES /

I HAVE AN IDEA, MARTIN / TOMORROW IS HALLOWEEN NIGHT / I THINK WE CAN HAVE FUN WITH OLD HANS /



WE'LL DISGUISE OURSELVES AS GHOSTS AND MAKE HANS FERRY US ACROSS THE RIVER / HE'LL BE SCARED OUT OF HIS WITS /

AGREED / I'LL MEET YOU HERE LATE TOMORROW NIGHT /



THE NEXT NIGHT THE TWO MEN, DISGUISED AS GHOSTS IN WHITE ROBES, DESCENDED UPON THE OLD FERRYMAN.

AH, W-WHAT IS THIS? WHAT DO YOU WANT? WHO ARE YOU?

WE ARE DEATH / YOU ARE COMMANDED TO FERRY US ACROSS THE RIVER STAY /



THE OLD FERRYMAN DID AS HE WAS TOLD. THE PASSENGERS COULD HARDLY KEEP FROM LAUGHING, BUT THE OLD MAN WAS FRIGHTENED INTO UNDERSTANDING.



WHEN LAST SEEN, THE BARGE WAS SHIFTING OUT INTO THE MIST-COVERED WATERS. A FOX SUDDENLY FELL OVER THE RIVER AND HIS BOAT FROM VIEW.



THE FERRY NEVER REACHED ITS DESTINATION AND THE FERRYMAN AND HIS CARO WERE DISAPPEARED / THE TOWN-PEOPLE DRAINED THE RIVER FOR MILES IN SEARCH OF THE BARGE AND THE MEN ON IT. NOT A TRACE OF THE THREE MEN ON THE BOAT WAS EVER FOUND / JUST ANOTHER STRANGE MYSTERY IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL /



UNDERWATER MYSTERY

A murky form materialized from the black depths. The form was a little below him, was walking, drifting slowly towards him as it ascended. It conditioned him to realize that this figure could rise, while he himself was compelled to descend. The figure came closer, came outstretched, twisted face twisted into convulsive lines of stark horror.

It was a man. Marchant remembered the stolid, square face of the German who had hurried by, when he had been struggling with the huge body of Zrinyi.

The German gazed at him dully, deflated pan. He saw that the man's eyes were closing, with a scolding finality, only the appraised, exploring arms apparently having life. The heavy beam of the German drifted past his head; the figure disappeared.

"Lorna! Lorna, dearest! Where are you? I will come to you, if you will let me know where you are!"

He had stopped descending at last. He was rising on what apparently was the bottom of the abyssal profundity. Black, soaking mire sucked at his feet, made his ladder steps even more difficult, slower. Other figures wandered dully around him on the floor, staring bottom. They were groping, searching . . .

"Lorna! Lorna, where are—"

He saw her. She seemed miles away, her vague figure merging dimly with the black mass. Yet he could see her face, a white blotch that drifted closer and closer.

Staggering, with maddening deliberation, his feet carried him towards her. He could see another figure, a huge, distorted figure heaving down upon the girl from above. It was Zrinyi.

The hideous man was rearing the girl, descending upon her with greater speed than Marchant could summon into his lagging legs.

Lorna held out her arms, her terrified eyes beseeching him to hurry, even as she endeavored to move to him. He cursed his deadened legs and their maddening sluggish motions, tried to run, and found that he could move no faster.

"Lorna! Lorna, darling, run to me! Beloved, there is some one trying to come near you. From above. Look above you!"

As though she were unaware that Marchant was shouting to her, warning her, Lorna called to him.

"John, dear! Come to me, please. Harry, John. He is coming!"

Marchant felt the uneasy thrill of her voice in his brain. He knew that he had not heard Lorna call, something in his mind had telegraphed him she was pleading with him.

"Lorna, darling! I'm coming as fast as I can!"

But he knew he could not hope to reach her before the black, sinister form of Zrinyi would descend upon her. Even as he watched, the hulking man reached out, his huge arms snatching Lorna's wrist, pulling her to him. The diabolical face was twisted in a horrible expression, as it pressed near Lorna's white ear.

The girl and the clanking monster were locked for a moment, struggling with lethargic, sluggish movements. Lorna succeeded in pulling away from his grasp. Zrinyi reached out, caught her again.

Zrinyi's paws locked their fingers convulsively in a death grip about her slender little throat. The fingers tightened, Lorna's head was forced back, a horrible expression of pain and fear etching across her white face. The huge devil kept on choking, choking. . . .

A black mist of futile rage swam before Marchant's blatted eyes, a dull roaring of his own brain pounding in his ear. If only he could make his leaden legs move faster. . . .

It was too late now. Lorna lay limp on the sucking mass of the bottom. The fiend was heaving over her, staring at her. . . . The black mist clouded Marchant's vision again. Rage and frustration clamped at a vice about him.

The mist cleared, and he saw the ghastly form of the monster coming toward him, the face black and demonic with a better rage. His fingers were extended, clatching towards Marchant. Marchant moved as fast as he could to meet him, horror and revenge stirring his half-dead brain.

Lorna! Where was she? He gazed about as he moved. Shapes, grotesque and horrible, still drifted silently about him, above him. But Lorna had gone. She had disappeared. A moment ago—or was it a century!—she had been on her knees, then on her back, her white throat in the grasp of the ghoul-like Zrinyi. Now she had been spinned away, was nowhere. Had Zrinyi killed her, and had she, in death, dissolved into nothing?

A murderous fury consumed Marchant as he suddenly closed with the horrible specter of Zrinyi. This man had killed Lorna! Had brutally throttled her when, delicate throat. . . .

At first his rage lent him strength, and he seemed to overpower the malicious, inhuman thing with which he was fighting. But Zrinyi's manual force was more than down. He was suddenly fighting a hopeless, losing battle for what remained of his life.

He felt himself, still struggling weakly, sink into the slony mire at his feet. Groggling, he tore feebly at the hands about his windpipe, tried to loosen them.

The fingers remained incredibly firm, with a grip of a madman. Then blackness slowly stole over him. He felt his body relax, go limp as his back sagged into the water.

"Lorna, Lorna! Darling—I'm dying. I will be—with you—beloved."

He lay perfectly still.

He was vaguely aware that there were no hands about his throat. He seemed to be floating through time and space. He was ascending. Far above, he could see the glimmer of light. It appeared a little stranger, if he were dead, and drifting toward Elysium, then he would soon be with Lorna.

His head and lungs were suddenly spinning, as though they had been a long time deprived of air. He could drag no air into his aching body.

His eyes opened, because accustomed to the light. The first thing he saw was the beloved face of Lorna. He gasped her name, heard her murmur his. Her features were contracted at first in fear, but as he moved, she broke into a tend, relieved smile, pressed her wet face against his, sobbed:

"John! John! Thank heaven!"

A man's heavy, uniformed body was crawling off Marchant's clothing chest and stomach. The man, he realized, was a member of the *Arctide's* crew, and had been working over him, ensuring life-giving air into his lungs by means of artificial respiration.

"You're okay now, buddy," the sailor muttered. "And you're lucky."

Marchant looked about him. He was in one of the large lifeboats of the *Arctide*. There were six or seven scum on the boat. The others, some fifteen or so, were, like himself and Lorna, passengers on the *Arctide*. They were huddled together under blankets trying to warm their wet, chilled bodies. The sailors were pulling at long oars, weaving the boat in and out of the debris and wreckage which floated about on the surface of the oily water. From time to time the boat stopped and the crew fished exhausted human beings out of the water.

One of the bodies floated near, arms flitting slightly. Marchant saw when the crew had helped the man into the boat, that it was the solid-faced German—half drowned, gasping hoarsely as he sucked air into his burning lungs.

Marchant turned to Lorna, pressed her cold cheek against his, kissed her.

"Thank heaven you're all right," he breathed.

He could see no sign of the *Arctide*, the huge passenger liner upon which he and Lorna had been returning from a tour of Europe. Nothing but an oily, turbulent surface remained where the big ship had been. He saw distinctly the skyline of New York's Lower Manhattan. There were the buildings he had been so glad to see again. They were almost within sight of the harbor. He saw tugboats and fire-boats steaming toward them, their search lights

"The *Arctide* sink?" he asked in a low voice.

Lorna nodded.

"Yes. One of the engine rooms caught on fire. The boilers burst, blowing holes through the bottom of the ship. She went down almost at once. Only a few of us were saved."

Marchant remembered the ominous trembling of the polished teak deck, it should have warned him that something was wrong. Then the terrible hail coming through the bulkheads and a scum-biter—he had ignored that also, until too late. The explanation—that had been one of the boilers going. The flash of fire, and the sharp blow on his head when he had been hauled against the suddenly slanting deck rail.

It all came back to him now, vividly, rapidly. He had been unconscious—must have been—had sunk probably to the bottom of the river along with some of the other passengers. Lorna had gone down too, had come to the surface before him, after struggling work—

He started as he gazed upon Lorna's throat. The soft white flesh was horribly inflamed, there were ugly, livid welts—finger marks.

"Lorna!" he rasped. "That man? Zeng? That re-human beast who talked about democracy, just before we went down? Your throat? Who was he?"

The sailor who had worked over him, said:

"Yeah, buddy, your girl friend asked about him, too. That guy was a nut. We've taken him across before. Some kind of foreigner who went around preaching about how the day of judgment's always coming. He just happened to be spouting it to you when the boiler burst and took us apart. He went down, too."

But her throat—the marks—

"Yeah," the sailor said. "Your own neck's scratched up same, too. That guy was drowning. A drowning man who can't swim will grab anything he can get his hands on. First clothes, then neck-straps. When he grabbed your neck and the young lady's, at practically knocked you both out, I guess. When you lay still, you sank—and when you sank you want a lot more help to the drowner's guy. He let go. He got away somebody else, and they both came up eventually. If you twist your head, you can see what happened to that nut."

Marchant looked at the body floating near the boat. It was the body of Zeng. The ghastly, leering face was purple and bloated in death. Marchant turned his head away, a little sick. He held both Lorna's small hands tightly in his.

The sailor looked grimly at Marchant, said:

"Your girl friend and I thought you was never coming up. It musta taken you ninety seconds."

Marchant looked into Lorna's eyes, drew her closer to him.

"No," he said slowly. "It took ninety years."

THE END

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

THE BURIED TREASURE OF CAPTAIN KIDD, THE NOTORIOUS PIRATE, HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF MANY TALES AND LEGENDS. SOME ARE TRUE BUT MOST ARE THE CREATIONS FROM THE FERTILE MINDS OF AUTHORS. THE FOLLOWING STORY IS TAKEN FROM THE FILES OF POLICE RECORDS IN A FLORIDA COASTAL TOWN.

IN THE SUMMER OF 1607, MATTHEW BOWER WANDERED ON A DESERTED BEACH. SUDDENLY HE SPIED A HALF-BURIED SWORD IN THE SAND.



HMMM, THAT CUTLASS LOOKS LIKE ONE USED BY THE OLD PIRATES!

AS BOWER TOOK THE SWORD, HE FELT IT SCRAPE METAL HIDDEN IN THE SAND. HE EXCITEDLY BEGAN DIGGING, UNTIL...



AN OLD PIRATE CHEST! GOLD! I'VE FOUND PIRATE GOLD!

BOWER WAS ALMOST MAD WITH DELIGHT AT HIS DISCOVERY. AS HE PUT A HANDFUL OF COINS INTO HIS POCKET, HE BLANCED UP.



W-HOA, CAPTAIN KIDD!

ABOVE HIM LOOMED THE OBRUSQUE FIGURE OF THE FAMOUS PIRATE, CAPTAIN KIDD!



IT'S MINE! I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE I LET YOU TAKE IT FROM ME! I'LL RUN YOU THROUGH WITH YOUR OWN CUTLASS!

BOWER BLEW THE MAN CONFRONTING HIM AND RACED INTO TOWN TO FIND HELP.



I'VE FOUND CAPTAIN KIDD'S TREASURE AND I KILLED HIM WHEN HE TRIED TO STOP ME FROM TAKING IT!

EASY, SON! I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, BUT WHEN YOU MENTION MURDER, THAT'S MY BUSINESS! LET'S GO!

WHEN BOWER AND THE SHERIFF REACHED THE FATAL SPOT...



THERE'S NO TRACE OF TREASURE HERE, SON! BUT HERE'S YOUR CORPSE! IT'S OLD BEN, THE BEACHCOMBER!

HE'S HIDDEN MY TREASURE! IT WAS HERE AN HOUR AGO! MY TREASURE IS GONE!

MATTHEW BOWER WAS SENT TO PRISON FOR LIFE FOR THE MURDER HE HAD COMMITTED. HIS ONLY COMPANY FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE WAS A HANDFUL OF PIECES - SP - EIGHT THAT HE FORGOTTEN ENDLESSLY. THERE IS NO EXPLANATION AS TO WHERE HE HAD ACQUIRED THIS BIT OF PIRATE TREASURE!

TERROR IN THE COAL PITS

I SHOULDN'T STOP! IT MIGHT BE A HIGHWAY ROBERT STUNT! BUT I CAN'T JUST RUN HIM DOWN! AND THAT OTHER CAR—IF HE TRIES TO JUMP OUT OF MY WAY IN THAT DIRECTION . . .



AFTER TEN HOURS OF HARD DRIVING, THE EYES SOMETIMES PLAY TRICKS ON YOU, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT. I WAS HITTING IT UP THROUGH THE MOUNTAINOUS COAL MINE SECTION OF PENNSYLVANIA, NEARING THE END OF MY TRIP, WHEN SUDDENLY, ALMOST OUT OF NOWHERE, A MAN STOOD FIRM IN THE CROSS-CROSS GLARE OF MY CAR AND ONE COMING FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION. HE WAS FRANTICALLY FLASHING HIS ARMS AT ME IN A STOP-SIGNAL AND I BEGAN TO PUMP THE BRAKES. THAT WAS HOW IT STARTED, THE MOST STRANGELY HAUNTING AND TERRIFYING NIGHT OF MY LIFE.

SUDDENLY, BEFORE MY HORROR-STUNNED BRAIN, THE MAN STOPPED TO ONE SIDE, FULL INTO THE PATH OF THE OTHER ON-RUSHING CAR! STRANGELY, HE SEEMED COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF HIS DANGER, AND THOUGH BOTH SETS OF HEADLIGHTS FOCUSED ON THE MAN IN THE ROAD, THE OTHER DRIVER FAILED TO SEE HIM, DIDN'T SLOWEN OR SLACKEN SPEED, BUT CRASHED STRAIGHT INTO HIM!



WHAT A HORRIBLE THING! STRANGE THOUGH, HE SEEMED TO DISAPPEAR AFTER THAT CAR STRUCK HIM, OR ELSE I WAS TEMPORARILY BLINDED BY THE HEADLIGHTS!



AS I GOT OUT OF THE CAR AND STARTED BACK, I SAW AN AMAZING THING! THE MAN WHO HAD BEEN SO MURDEROUSLY RUN OVER WAS WALKING TOWARD ME, APPARENTLY UNHURT.

I EXPECTED TO FIND YOU IN PIECES LYING IN THE DITCH, THE WAY THAT CAR PUNNED YOU!

IT DIDN'T REALLY HIT ME! YOU CAN SEE, MISS JARVIS, I'M NOT HURT!



HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE? WHAT IS IMPORTANT, MISS JARVIS, IS THAT YOU STOPPED FOR ME. NOW, IF YOU'LL JUST FOLLOW ME TO THE MINE, QUICKLY, THE MEN NEED YOUR NURSING EXPERIENCE! THERE'S BEEN A BAD CASE—M!



HE KNEW MY NAME AND THE FACT THAT I WAS A NURSE! I WAS AFRAID, YET I SEEMED POWERLESS TO DISOBEY HIM. I FOUND MYSELF FOLLOWING HIM NEDDLY DOWN A DARK, LONELY PATH...



HURRY! THE MINE SHAFT IS ONLY A FEW HUNDRED YARDS AHEAD!

A RICKETY ELEVATOR PLUNGED US TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SHAFT WHERE THE DEATHLY SILENCE WAS SO THICK YOU COULD FEEL IT PRESSING AROUND YOU. I WAS WEAK WITH FEAR, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE TO TURN BACK NOW.



DON'T MIND THE RATS AND BATS! THEY WON'T BOTHER US!

THAT MULE'S SKELETON—THE BEAST MUST'VE BEEN DEAD FOR YEARS! AND THAT WRECKED COAL CAR IS COATED WITH RUST! HOW IS THAT?



LATER YOU'LL UNDERSTAND ALL THIS!

SUDDENLY, AS I FOLLOWED HIM, OUT WENT THE MINER'S NAT-LAMP, BUT INSTEAD OF COMPLETE, ENVELOPING BLACK, I SAW...



YOU'RE ALL AROUND WITH SOME GREENISH, GHOSTLY LIGHT! WHAT IS IT?

I—UH—PROBABLY PHOSPHOROUS! LOT OF IT DOWN IN THESE MINES! AT LEAST YOU CAN STILL SEE TO FOLLOW ME!



IN A FEW MINUTES WE EMERGED FROM THE TUNNEL INTO
EARTH-LINE PIT NUMBER FIVE.

YOU SEE, I BROUGHT
HEN HERE SAFELY, MR.
MANKO!

THANK GOODNESS!
COME OVER HERE, MAMA
JANIS! HURRY! I-I FEEL
THAT MY TIME IS ALMOST
UP AND I HAVE IMPORTANT
THINGS TO TELL YOU!



THIS MAN WAS INTRODUCED TO ME AS ALVIN MANKO,
OWNER OF THE LUCKY MULE WINE, WHO HAD BEEN
ON AN INSPECTION TOUR WHEN HE GOT CAUGHT BY
THE CAVE-IN. AN EERIE FEELING CRAWLED OVER
ME AT REALIZATION THAT HE, TOO, KNEW MY NAME
AND SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN EXPECTING ME...

LUCKY THING I CARRY A FIRST-AID KIT! FRESH
BANDAGES WILL MAKE YOU AND THE OTHERS A
LITTLE MORE COMFORTABLE.
ANYHOW, MR. MANKO!

DON'T
WASTE TOO MUCH
TIME ON US! IT WON'T
DO MUCH GOOD. I'VE GOT A
LETTER THAT YOU MUST
TAKE TO MY SON, WALTER!



THIS LETTER WILL TELL THE LUCKY
MULE MAN TO WALTER AND TELLS THE
LOCATION OF A BIG, RICH NEW VEIN OF
ANTHRACITE WE DISCOVERED JUST
BEFORE THE CAVE-IN! LEAVE NOW,
MISS JANIS, BEFORE IT'S TOO
LATE! HURRY!

BUT I DON'T
UNDERSTAND! YOU MEN AREN'T
REALLY TRAPPED?
IF I COULD...



AN UNUSUAL HUMBLING HOAT FROM THE TUNNEL
LEADING TO THE ELEVATOR SHAFT INTERRUPTED
ME... FEARFUL OF BEING TRAPPED BY A NEW CAVE-IN,
I STARTED BACK DOWN THE TUNNEL, TOWARD THE
EXIT WITHOUT FURTHER QUESTIONS.

IF I GET OUT, I CAN
SEND BACK HELP!



WHEN I CAME, THE TUNNEL WAS
IN PITCH BLACKNESS! NOW THERE
ARE TORCHES SO THAT I CAN SEE
MY WAY! BUT WHERE DID THEY
COME FROM? WHO PUT
THEM THERE?



THAT WAS JUST ANOTHER OF THE MANY
STRANGE AND AWESOME THINGS HAPPENING
THIS INSANE NIGHT, TO WHICH THERE
SEEMED NO LOGICAL EXPLANATION. NOW
DID I HAVE MUCH TIME TO THINK ABOUT
IT? SUDDENLY, AHEAD OF ME, JUST
BEFORE I REACHED THE ELEVATOR,

ANOTHER CAVE-IN! I'LL BE
TRAPPED, TOO! AND THERE'S GAS!
IT'LL SMOOTHER ME, EVEN IF IT
DOESN'T COME FROM
THOSE TORCHES!



A HOLE JUST BIG ENOUGH FOR ME TO WIGGLE THROUGH / GOT TO HURRY / CAN'T STOP FOR MY SHOE OR PURSE / GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!



JUST AS I REACHED THE ELEVATOR AND STARTED UP THE GAS IN THE TUNNEL IGNITED! THERE WAS A DEAFENING EXPLOSION AND THE TUNNEL FROM WHICH I'D BARELY ESCAPED BECAME A SCENE OUT OF HADES. THE SOUND STUNNED ME AND THE BLAST OF HOT AIR FROM THE EXPLOSION ALMOST BLEW ME OVER.



A FEW MINUTES LATER...

OUT HERE IN THE OPEN NIGHT, I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE THOSE NIGHTMARE THINGS HAPPENED, EXCEPT THAT MY SHOE AND PURSE ARE GONE, AND I HAVE THIS LETTER!



A FEW MILES FARTHER ON, I CAME TO ROCK CITY, A TYPICAL MIDDLE TOWN, ROUGH AND COLORFUL AS THE MEN WHO WORKED THERE...

I DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT WALTER HARKO LOOKS LIKE / YET, STRANGELY, I FEEL THAT I WILL KNOW HIM!



AS THOUGH SOME HOSTILE HAND WAS LEADING ME, I WALKED INTO ONE OF THE TOWN BARS, AND...

YOU'RE WALTER HARKO, AREN'T YOU? YOU— YOU LOOK A LOT LIKE YOUR FATHER!

WH—WHAT'S THAT? HOW'D YOU KNOW MY FATHER?



NEVER MIND THIS DAME, WALT! HURRY UP AND SIGN THAT DEED TO THE MINE AND GET IT OVER WITH! SCRAM, GIRLIE! WE'RE TALKIN' BIG BUSINESS!



IF THIS IS THE DEED TO THE LUCKY HOLE, WALT, YOU'D BETTER WAIT UNTIL YOU READ YOUR FATHER'S WILL AND HIS LETTER ABOUT THE BIG NEW VEIN OF ANTIMONY HE FOUND!

WALT'S OLD MAN DIDN'T LEAVE ANY WILL! HE WAS KILLED TEN YEARS AGO IN A MINE CAVE-IN! HE'S STILL DOWN THERE! THEY NEVER GOT THE DEAD GUYS OUT!



WHAT WAS HE SAYING? ALVIN HANKO DEAD TEN YEARS? THE MIKE CASE-IT HAPPENED THAT LONG AGO? THEN HOW COULD I HAVE POSSIBLY TALKED TO THOSE MEN TONIGHT?

BUT-BUT I SAW MR HANKO! JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO! HE...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR ANGLES IS, SISTER, BUT GIVE ME BACK THAT DEED!



I'M TRYING TO BUST UP OUR DEAL, I'LL

LEAVE HER ALONE, CAMPO? I WANT TO HEAR HER STORY!



WOULDN'T YOU HEAR ME? MAYBE THIS WILL OPEN YOUR EARS!

UGH!

SOCK!



AFTER HE LED ME BACK TO HIS TABLE, WALTER HANKO TOLD ME THAT CAMPO HAD BEEN AFTER HIM FOR A WEEK TO SELL THE LUCKY WOLF ANNE TO HIM.

THIS-THIS LETTER FROM MY FATHER! IF IT ISN'T A HOAX, IT MEANS THAT HE DISCOVERED A NEW YEN! THAT MAKES THE MIKE WORTH A FORTUNE!

IT ISN'T ANY HOAX! I CAN DESCRIBE YOUR FATHER!



WHEN I HAD FINISHED DESCRIBING THE NEW-YEN THE MIKE...

THAT'S DAD, ALL RIGHT! AND THE OTHER MAN YOU DESCRIBED IS HIS FOREMAN AND YOUR DESCRIPTION OF PIT B IS PERFECT! MAYBE THIS IS ALL ON THE LEVEL, I LET'S GO SEE MY LAWYER! BUT FIRST I'LL GO HOME AND GET CLEANED UP!



AT THE HOME OF COLIN ANDREWS, THE HANKO FAMILY'S ATTORNEY, SOME OF ALVIN'S ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS WERE USED TO COMPARE THE HANDWRITING OF THE WILL AND LETTER THAT I HAD BROUGHT TO WALTER.

THEY CHECK PERFECTLY, WALTER! THIS LETTER IS FROM YOUR FATHER, ALL RIGHT! IT'S A STRANGE THING, VERY STRANGE!

ESPECIALLY UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES! PERHAPS YOU'D BETTER TELL THEM TO MONA!



ALVIN HANKO WAS BANKRUPT, HIS MIKE WORKED OUT, AT THE TIME OF HIS-UN-DEATH! WALT AND HIS FATHER HAD ALWAYS BEEN VERY CLOSE, AND THE ACCIDENT, FINDING OUT HE WAS BROKE, AND HAVING TO ASSUME ALL OF HIS FATHER'S DEBTS, WAS A SEVERE SHOCK TO THE BOY. HE WAS NEVER GOOD FOR MUCH AFTER THAT!





WALT HANNO REMEMBERED THAT TUNNEL TEN DIED BACK UP AGAINST PIT FIVE. HE HURRIED THERE, AND THE MEN REVERENDLY WENT TO WORK. AFTER SEVERAL HOURS,

THERE'S A LOT OF SAND AND LOOSE SHALE, EASY TO CHISEL THROUGH! THEY'RE LIABLE TO BREAK THROUGH ANY MINUTE!



HEY, MR. HANNO, LOOK AT THIS! LOOK WHAT I FOUND IN TUNNEL SEVEN!

WHAT IS IT, STEVENS?



THIRTY MINUTES LATER, THE BREAK-THROUGH WAS MADE. WALTER AND I CLAMBERED HOME. EVERYTHING WAS THE SAME AS IT HAD BEEN THE NIGHT BEFORE, IN PIT FIVE, EXCEPT THAT THE MEN I'D SEEN AND TALKED TO WERE SKELETONS, TEN YEARS DEAD!

I-I FINALLY GOT TO YOU, DAD, THANKS TO MOM! AND DAD - YOU'RE GOING TO BE PROUD OF ME, FROM NOW ON I'LL FIND THAT NEW VEIN AND THE LUCKY MULE WILL ONCE AGAIN BE GOING FULL BLAST!



A STRANGE SENSE OF RELIEF SURGED THROUGH ME AS I SAW THAT HE HAD FOUND MY SHOE AND PURSE, LOST IN THE MINE THE NIGHT BEFORE! I KNEW NOW THAT MORE OF THIS WAS JUST COINCIDENCE, THAT EVEN THOUGH THE TIME ELEMENT WAS OFF, ALL THOSE STRANGE THINGS HAD HAPPENED. I HAD BEEN HERE LAST NIGHT! AND YET, HOW COULD ANYONE EXPLAIN THE STRANGE OCCURRENCES OF THE PAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS?



A LADY'S SHOE AND PURSE! HOW COULD THEY GET IN HERE?

I-UN-DON'T KNOW, STEVENS! JUST FORGET ABOUT IT! WE'LL TAKE THOSE THINGS!



A LITTLE LATER, THE NEW VEIN OF COAL WAS LOCATED AS WALTER'S DEAD FATHER HAD DESCRIBED IT. . .

BY THE LOOKS OF THIS, THE LUCKY MULE WILL BE KEPT GOING FULL FORCE FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS, AT LEAST! THAT SMOKE, CAMP, MUST HAVE FOUND OUT ABOUT THIS, SOME DAY. THAT'S WHY HE WAS SO ANGRIOUS TO BUY THE MINE FROM ME, CHEAP!



WALTER HANNO AND I ARE MARRIED NOW. THE LUCKY MULE WINE PROSPERS. WE NEVER DISCUSS THE BIZARRE ADVENTURE OF THAT STRANGE NIGHT I SPENT IN THE COAL PITS. "BETTER TO FORGET IT", WALTER TOLD ME. "THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT ARE BETTER LEFT UNSPOKEN. SOME PEOPLE WOULD CALL YOU INSANE!" SO I TRY TO FORGET IT. . . BUT SOME TIMES. . .





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